I: Karsten--259
116, 721, 181

(1916-18) 1935
(1928-29)

Jivaro

"The Jibaros are no doubt at present the most warlike of all Indian tribes in South America. The blood-feuds within the tribes and the wars of extermination between the different tribes are continuous, being nourished by their superstitious belief in witchcraft. These wars are the greatest curse of the Jibaros and are felt to be so even by themselves, at least so far as the feuds within the tribes are concerned. On the other hand, the wars are to such a degree one with their whole life and essence that only powerful pressure from outside or a radical change of their whole character and moral views could make them abstain from them. This one may judge even from the fact that from a victory over his enemies the Jibaro warrior not only expects honour and fame in the ordinary sense of the word but also certain material benefits. The head trophy which he takes from his slain enemy is not merely a token of victory, but becomes a fetish charged with supernatural power, and the great victory-feast itself with its many mysterious ceremonies in fact forms a part of the practical religion or cult of the Jibaros.

1: Karsten--264 (1916-18) 1935 Jivaro
116, 152, 181, 722 (1928-29)

"All these precautions in their way illustrate the almost maniacal suspiciousness and dread of enemies which dominates the Jibaros. The mere discovery of mysterious footprints in the neighbourhood of the house, left by unknown Indians who apparently have gone sneaking about at night, may cause an indescribable excitement in the inhabitants. The footprints are carefully examined for the sake of ascertaining from what tribe they originate, message is sent to neighbouring houses, where further inquiries are made. 'We have found such and such footprints near our house, they are not like the feet of anybody from our own tribe, no one of our relations walks in that way, they must originate from strangers, may be of that and that tribe. Have you noticed anything exciting suspicion in the neighbourhood of your house or seen any strange Indians?', and so forth. Assuming that the mysterious footprints might possibly have been left by enemy spies who are planning an attack against the house, the inhabitants continue their inquiries with the energy that the Jibaros generally display when an important enterprise is in question, and take measures of defence."

1: Karsten--291-292 (1916-18) 1935 Jivaro
116, 727, 181 (1928-29)

"It may therefore be justly said that in their wars the Jibaros know no mercy. And although the Jibaro Indian does not particularly practise [292] methods of torturing his vanquished enemy, caught in a war, he on the other hand does not content himself with merely taking his life. He wants to shed as much blood as possible and delights in mutilating the body of the slain enemy, being especially anxious to secure his head. The scene of a battle between Jibaro Indians therefore generally offers a dreadful spectacle of a savage lust of destruction and thirst for blood."

116, 181

"There is no doubt that the Jivaros, from a time dating shortly after the conquest, have contrasted noticeably with their neighbors, a contrast which is even more evident at the present time. Their fine physical appearance, vivacity, energy, and love of freedom have been commented upon by all travelers who have encountered them.

Benavente, in 1540, irked because of his inability to break the spirit of some Jivaro captives, called them the most arrogant of all of the tribes in the Indies.

In 1815 Prieto gave the following description:

The Jivaros are reputed to be the most cruel infidels in this part of America, although they are not such stupid barbarians as the various other nations in [3]the mountains bordering on the province of Mainas. They are extremely lively, thoroughly intelligent; they learn easily when one teaches them and even from observation. In order to get satisfaction from the person with whom they are dealing, they are exceedingly amiable and obsequious, giving away, for this reason, anything that they possess. They do not lie among themselves, and much less steal, and if at any time this happens (which is very rare), the thief is thought to be an extremely wicked person, is hated by all and covered with everlasting disgrace. Neither are the Jivaros drunkards, and they look with scorn upon the inebriated; a very unusual trait among the Indians of America.(1)

"1. Prieto, in Compte, pp.64-65."

116, 181

Even today the intelligence and independent air of the Jivaro, combined with a fine physique produced by an active out-of-doors existence, creates a most favorable impression on the visitor."

2: Stirling--3 [2] (1930-1931) 1938 Jivaro
116, 177, 181

"Typical of the statements of modern writers is that of Rivet, who said at the beginning of the present century:

The Jivaro does not have the submissive, humble, cringing appearance, I might almost say servile, of the civilized Indian; much to the contrary, everything in him reveals the free man, passionately loving liberty, incapable of putting up with the slightest subjection. The eye is quick, the look steady, the physiognomy mobile and expressive, their movements rapid and animate, their speech easy and assured. * * *So one finds him in the forests in the midst of virgin nature whose pure splendor forms a magnificent frame for the indomitable savage. (2)

This same 'virgin nature', friendly to those who have adapted themselves to her embrace, so hostile to those who have not, has enabled these children of the jungle to maintain the spirit of independence against the conquering might of the Inca, the greed of the gold-hungry conquistador, and the passionate zeal of the missionary.

The alliance between nature and the Jivaros has enabled these Indians successfully to repulse for 400 years the most determined efforts of the white man to establish himself in their territory."

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"2. Rivet, 1907, p. 361."

2: Stirling--41 (1930-1931) 1938 Jivaro
116, 181, 721

"At the present time the Jivaros are without doubt the most warlike group in all South America, and it is probable that this statement would hold true for the past century. In this respect, however, they have merely retained a custom and a war pattern that was widespread in northwestern South America at the time of the conquest."

2: Stirling--50
116, 721, 555, 181

(1930-1931) 1938

Jivaro

"It is certainly true that at the present time the most important thing in life to a Jivaro is war. His greatest aspiration is to become renowned as a fighter. His reputation increases in proportion to the number of heads he has succeeded in securing during his career. Warfare consists of raids conducted by one group or alliance upon another, and, while of very frequent occurrence, they are sporadic in nature."

3: Simson --385 (No date) 1880 Jivaro
116, 157, 181, 177

"The tribe or family of the Jívaros is a large one, and one of the most distinguished, independent, and warlike in South America. They alike withstood the attacks of the Jucas and the Spaniards, burning the once famed cities of Logroño and Mendoza, and massacring all the male inhabitants who did not succeed in making their escape; and even to this day they maintain the most thorough independence. The missions at Macas and Gualaquiza have as yet produced no practical results, nor obtained any authority over the Indians. A Jesuit padre, who had resided three years at Gualaquiza amongst them, informed me that he had found it impossible to make any progress with them; and more than once his life was personally threatened. During these three years twenty nine whites (i.e., half-caste traders) were killed in the neighbourhood of Gualaquiza."

4: Up de Graff--222-223 (1897) 1923 Jivaro-1
116, 511, 181, 619

"Contentment reigns supreme. Men and women seem happy in their lot. They have an abundance of every necessity and luxury they know. Their one worry in life is the constant fear of attack by raiders, but this they forget as easily as children do the dangers ot the street . Light is the daily round of all, and above all others of him who has a daughter to give in marriage! He who aspires to her hand becomes to all intents and purposes the slave of his future father-in-law for a term of five or six months until he proves his worth. The young savage takes over the scouting, hunting and fishing duties of the house into which he is going to marry; he is at the beck and call of its head, and must answer every call like a fag at school. But only once does he go through the mill; his own household set up, he takes to himself as many wives as he can find among his own people or steal from his enemies; thus it comes about that there is many a woman among the four Jívaro tribes who has been stolen and re-stolen until she is as much at home on the Santiago as on the Marañon, as happy burning hair off monkeys for an Aguaruna as spinning cotton for a Pautecuma. Indeed to my mind there can be one explanation of the existence of identical languages, habits, clothes, modes of fishing and hunting, and applied arts among all the Jívaro peoples, namely that they spring from a common ancestral tribe. A family would break away from the common hunting grounds, move off and establish itself on another river, and nurse its hatred of the parent group until, joined by others, little by little it became the nucleus of another tribe. And so through the course of [223] time they have drifted so far apart that to-day no one tribe

is found with their headquarters within thirty days' canoeing of another, and a deadly hostility exists between them all. There are white men alive to-day in the States who have been scalped by North American Indians; but after the Jívaro has taken his war-trophy, 'finita la commedia.' "

5: Reyes and Teran--121 (No date) 1939 Jivaro
181

"Of all the aboriginal groups of the Oriente, the Jivaros are the most industrious and intelligent, although they resist civilization because of their repugnance to enter into social relations with the whites, whom they consider as objects of pity, subject to multiple needs, and above all, lacking in the sagacity and endurance required for the life of the forest."

10: Anthony--150 (1920-21) 1921 -Jivaro
116, 152, 181

"...there exists constant warfare in the land of the Jivaro, where the two powerful, primal passions prevail, struggle for woman and thirst for vengeance."

12: Rivet--361[2] (no date) 1907 Jívaro
116, 157, 181

The Jíbaro does not have a submissive, humble, cringing appearance, I might almost say servile, like the civilized Indian; much to the contrary, everything in him reveals the free man, passionately loving liberty, incapable of putting up with the slightest subjection. The eye is lively, the look bold, the face mobile and expressive, their movements rapid and animated, their speech easy and assured. Unhappily this is not the appearance of the savage when he comes to spend a few days in the cities of the inter-Andean valley. Dulled by alcohol, tired out from the trip, painfully affected by the cold climate of the Sierra, usually clothed with indescribable faded finery, he takes on a grotesque appearance and loses his original character and his proud carriage, but as I have described him, so one finds him in the forests, in the midst of virgin nature, whose pure splendor forms a magnificent frame for the indomitable savage.

12: Rivet--615 [2] (no date) 1907 Jívaro
116, 181, 721

One could say without exaggeration that the state of war is the normal state of the Jívaro. The resulting constant strain obliges the native to live always on guard, always ready to attack or defend. He never knows the restful, beneficent calm of peace. In these forests of the Amazon, there is nothing but assaults, surprises, bloody scenes, and never-satisfied hates which perpetuate themselves from generation to generation.

The causes of these hostilities are very numerous: often it is the necessity of getting women or even the appeal of profitable pillage. More often it is a matter of vengeance to be satisfied, vengeance founded on griefs that are sometimes real but usually imaginary as we shall see when later we study the role of the sorcerer. The law of the talon is actually the only law that rules these savage tribes. But even if these diverse motives did not exist, the Indians would still make war simply for the pleasure of it, by an instinctive need of their nature. They are also driven by the desire to acquire that very special glory that the possession of many shrunken heads gives in a Jívaro country. These trophies are no less an object of pride to the savage than commemorative medals are to the European soldier. In addition to this, these human mummies are the center of many beliefs and of many ceremonies, so obviously superstitious in character that the study of them belongs with the subject of religious life. In this chapter I will describe only their method of preparation and their principal characteristics.

13: Rivet--69 (no date) 1908 Jívaro
116, 181, 266, 721

The savage thinks only of killing; but in spite of these habits, he is not cannibalistic. However, Barriero says that as soon as his enemy falls dead, the conqueror tears out his heart and eats his brain (1); but Villavicencio and Lubbock affirm that cannibalism does not exist among our Indians (2) and no traveller, to my knowledge, has confirmed the account of Barriero (3).

Osculati reports that, "The savages make a kind of bowl with the skull of their victim, in which they drink a great quantity of chicha, thinking to show their profound scorn for the dead in this manner" (4). This detail has not been noted by any other author and it is well to remember that the Italian traveller did not visit the Jíbaros, but was simply lucky in seeing some representatives (belonging undoubtedly to the tribe of Canelos) in the Ecuadorian city of Ambato. Because of this fact, his account may be suspected of inaccuracy.

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1. Lettre publiee par Bollaert, op. cit., page 114.
2. Villavicencio, op. cit., page 360 . Lubbock, op. cit., page 31.
3. Cf. Theodor Koch. Die Anthropophagie der sudamerikanischen Indianer (Archives internationales d'Ethnographie, Leyde. Vol. XII, 1899, pages 78-110).
4. Osculati, op. cit., note on page 30.

20: Dyott--157-158
116, 627, 867, 181

(no date) 1926

Jivaro

"It was no longer plans for the morning that were being discussed: Kuashu was relating a rather long-winded story about a brother of his who had been foully murdered some years previously. He was telling his sons that the day would come when they would have to avenge the outrage.

It seemed that this uncle had beaten one of his wives to death because she was unfaithful to him, and the woman's family, considering the treatment unnecessarily harsh, had murdered the husband in retaliation. Custom said that Kuashu's family must also take a life in order to satisfy the Jivaro sense of justice. With this end in view, the spirit of revenge was being kept alive, and almost every day the young men of the household were reminded of the duty which they inherited, and how they would eventually have to kill some member of the family who were responsible for their uncle's murder. The boys listened to the tale, which had already been told them hundreds of times, with as much interest as if they had never heard it before, and I wondered how long it would be ere their hands were stained with blood. They saw nothing wrong in this lust for vengeance, for their creed taught them that the spirit [158] of their uncle could not rest till justice had been meted out. Furthermore, if they failed to take reprisals they and their families would be the ones to suffer."

22: Hamy--389 [2] (No date) 1873 Jivaro
116, 152, 181

"Morally, the Jivaro add to their bellicosity a courage which meets every test, and a remarkable cunning. Their character is indomitable, and they maintain above all else their love of independence."

25: Vigna--37 [2] (no date) 1945 Jivaro
116, 181

The Jíbaro man, king and absolute master of the household, does not himself do any heavy work; this is done by the Jíbaro woman. The man helps to clear the forest and prepare the vegetable gardens, but the woman must take care of the agricultural details. The principal occupation of the Jíbaro is hunting, fishing, and diplomatic relations with the other tribes. Nature, who has most prodigiously supplied the vegetative necessities to the Jíbaro, who is very parsimonious and has few requirements, demands very little of him. The consequent idleness offers great stimulation to his passions. Indolent and without desire, the Jíbaro on certain occasions fails to be rational. The easy promiscuity of the sexes in a climate favoring sensuality, the bold license in talking, especially on the part of the women, and the precocious physiological development, contribute to the low morality of the Jíbaro savage; although, to his honor it must be said that the Jíbaro who has not had contact with civilization, has an extremely fine sense of respect for truth, someone else's property, and the general precepts of natural law.

25: Vigna--37-38 (no date) 1945 Jivaro
116, 156, 181

The Jîbaro is materialist by nature. He has no organized social constitution (He does not recognize any chief or authorities, only provisionally and in case of reprisal.); he is polygamous, revengeful through tradition made precept, calculating and cold, inconstant and ungrateful; he does not easily assimilate outside influences; if [38] it is kept in mind that in addition to this he does not have expressions that formulate moral or supernatural ideas, one will have an idea of the social state of the Jîbaro.

26: Brüning--47-48 (1902) 1928 Jívaro
116, 175, 181

In June 1904, that is after my trip, the Indians along the upper Marañón made another uprising, killing all the white men who lived among them, some fifty or sixty, and even a few missionaries. These carnages are officially described as acts of treachery on the part of the Indians. But in going to the bottom of things one will find out that they are acts of retribution. These Indians are sensitive children of nature who never forget an insult even if it may take a long time until they get their revenge. They time their revenge according to the circumstances. Superstition, too, plays its part. For they first make a brew of a narcotic liana, which in the Aguaruna language is called náktém, while the white men call it "rope of death" (ayahuasca). The drinking of this brew causes them to have visions, and they shape their revenge plans in accordance with these hallucinations. In this manner many years may pass, and it can easily be understood that they then take their revenge not always on the guilty ones. They are aware of one thing only: the offense had come from the white men, and white men have to be punished for it....

[48] An affair which is only a joke for the whites is often a serious insult for the Indian. All these insults are put on one common bill, which must be paid in blood at a time which the Indians regard as auspicious. But when the time for payment comes, then the Indians know only Indians on one side and white men on the other. Even white men who are friendly toward the Indians are not exempt from punishment.

28: Tessman--354-355 (No date) 1930 Jivaro
116, 181, 721

One might be tempted to call the war the true religion of the Chiwaros...One is all the more inclined to say this, since warlike acts are in most cases acts of revenge for enchantments so that these warlike expeditions constitute religious acts of revenge against evil sorcerers. But whatever excuses and reasons one may discover, the fact remains that murderous thoughts have become a standard principle of the Chiwaro way of life. For example, one of the Aguarunas whom I had with me in the headquarter of the expedition said to me that "his heart was disquieted because he did not know whom he could kill now."

The Chiwaros live in a permanent state of war against parts of their own tribe, that is to say, Aguaruna is fighting against Aguaruna. And parts of the subtribes fight against other subtribes (for instance, the Aguarunas against the Uambisas). Of course, they also fight against other tribes and also against the whites. The Spaniards were rather badly beaten by the Chiwaros, who were never [355] completely subjected by the whites. The Chiwaros destroyed and ransacked whole settlements (like Borja), killed the men and abducted the women, etc. Later, they made raids on Peruvian outposts and killed a large part of the garrison. Today the Peruvian government, as centuries ago the Spaniards, does not dare to punish the most war-like of all the east-Peruvian Indians so that conditions along the Santiago today are just as insecure as they had been at the time of the Spanish colonization.

31: Danielsson--84 (1946-48) 1949 Jivaro
116, 131, 181

"The location of the Jibaro Indians is shown on Map I. This region is mostly a plain land with dense tropical jungle and many rivers and streamlets. Some mountain offshoots from the Andes, however, are to be found in the western parts. The communications are difficult, and natural barriers divide the territory. The total number of the population is unknown, but a guess of something around 10,000 seems justified. The Jibaros are one of the few tribes in Western Amazonas that has managed to maintain their political and cultural independence. White settlements exist only along the fringe of the Jibaro country and in the form of some isolated garrisons on the Morona and Santiago rivers. On the whole the Jibaros have successfully resisted all civilizing impact."

"The so-called 'fight-instinct' has frequently been mentioned as the cause of the war-like character of the Jibaros. There seem, however to be less mystical explanations, and the most common causes of fights and wars are probably the following: Violation of social mores, wish for revenge, damage through witchery, traditional rivalry, enmity, and stealing women.(3)[89]

It should, however, be noticed that there is a difference in practice concerning the killing within the same geographical group and between different geographical groups. In the first case, jus talionis is strictly followed. The same number from the enemy family is killed that was lost by the offended family. In the second case, namely, conflicts between different geographical groups, a complete war of extermination is carried out."

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"3. [See following sheet for footnote 3.]

"3. [Footnote 3; pages 86-88] That controversies on account of such factors as listed here usually lead to open fighting and killing is of course due to the lack of an established common law maintained by functional groups (police, judges, wardens), as the Swedish philosophers Hagerstrom and Olivecrona have pointed out. An experiment was made among the Yurupaza Jibaros in collaboration with Father Juan Ghinassi and with the consent of the Indians themselves. A jail was built at Father Juan's courtyard, and the Indians agreed to bring there all delinquents whom they unanimously regarded guilty, instead of letting the involved parties fight it out as they had done before. (As a matter of fact the majority of the Indians usually have a clear idea about who is the guilty according to the mores.) This turned out to be a working solution. The Indians considered the mere act of confinement as such to be a sufficiently severe penalty (the lack of liberty [87]is the greatest misfortune and shame that can occur to a Jibaro Indian), and the time of confinement was of no importance to them. The common 'sentence' was one or two days. All attempts to give Father Juan also judicial power were, however, in vain. The Indians correctly pointed out, that in spite of the fact that he had lived among them for the last twenty years, he didn't know as much as themselves about the mores and traditions of the society. During the subsequent seven months seventeen Indians were sentenced to imprisonment, and Father Juan's last report says that the rate of fighting and killing has decreased considerably. None of the Indians had insisted on long

prison terms, but some of them suggested that Father Juan should insult the prisoners several times a day as an additional penalty. All the 'plaintiffs' declared themselves to be content with the arrangement of imprisonment as a penalty."

32:Harner E-5 (1956-1957) 1962 SD9 Jivaro SD9

# *Jivaro Souls*

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THE Jívaro proper (*unitsuri tsuraʔ*) of eastern Ecuador have long been famous for their warlike practices,[1] but the assumptions about reality upon which they predicate such behavior have not been systematically studied and analyzed. A very important series of these assumptions is to be found in the Jívaro ideas concerning soul. Among these concepts has recently been discovered a deep-seated belief that killing leads to the acquisition of souls which provide a supernatural power conferring immunity from death. The purpose of the present paper is to outline some of the basic elements of these beliefs with the hope of providing a greater insight into Jívaro behavior.[2]

The emphasis here will be on presenting new data collected in 1956-57,[3] but the concluding paragraphs of the paper embody a commentary on relevant statements in the major publications dealing with this subject. At the outset it should be mentioned that I took the two most useful works on the Jívaro (Karsten 1935; Stirling 1938) into the field and went over them in detail with native informants. Accordingly, points of difference between the following material and that given by Karsten and Stirling should definitely be taken by the reader to indicate modification or refutation of the previously published statements, at least in regard to the Jívaro proper.[4]

Field research providing the present data was conducted for ten and a half months in the following river valleys occupied by the Jívaro: the Río Upano and its tributaries, the Río Tutanangoza and the Río Sepa; the Río Chiguasa; the Río Macuma; the Río Cangaimi; the Río Cusuimi; the Río Mangosiza; and in a refugee Jívaro settlement near Bucay on the western slope of the Andes. Informants who contributed particularly to the information embodied in the present paper were: ***MukuimpU***, ***TsakimpU***, ***UtitI Ukaʔu***, ***KugusI***, and ***Unta Akaču*** of the Río Tutanangoza; ***Maʔu*** of the upper Río Macuma; and ***Hintač*** of the Río Cangaimi. Chief interpreters were ***HwagA***, ***Tugi***, and ***Naita***, all from the Río Tutanangoza region.

The best information on supernatural concepts was obtained in intensive eight or nine hour daily interviews with single informants over periods of a few days to several weeks. This was an exhausting procedure for all involved: interviewer, interpreter, and informant, but was conducive to the elicitation of truthful detail. Informants' accounts were continually cross-checked and contradictions called to their attention individually. An informant, when thus confronted with a contradiction, and with his reputation for knowledge and veracity at stake, generally provided elaborative supporting detail which he might not have otherwise volunteered.



For explanation of footnotes, see category 116, pp 270-272 --Analyst]

32:Harner E-5 (1956-1957) 1962 SD9 Jivaro SD9



One can often see deer and owls lingering in the vicinity of abandoned garden and house sites.[17] The Jívaro interpret the presence of such creatures at these old living places as evidence that the animals are temporarily visible embodiments of true souls. The true souls, when they are in these visible forms, are referred to as "human demons" (*Juar* iwančI). There is a moderate fear of them, particularly by women, and the Jívaro taboo on the eating of deer meat is based on the fear that eating such an animal might result in a deceased person's soul entering the body of the living person with the result that he may subsequently die. These "human demon" animals are often seen in pairs, a fact which the Jívaro interpret as indicating that the two creatures are temporarily visible forms of the souls of a man and his wife.

When a true soul has thus repeated the entire life history of its deceased owner, it ceases its existence as a "human demon" and changes into a "true demon." As a true demon, its form is permanently visible and more or less human, although a good deal uglier. The true demon roams the forest hungry, solitary, and lonely, feeling greatly the loss of the company of its former family. When Jívaro children wander into the forest and are not found immediately, it is said that a true demon carried off the child because it was so lonely for human companionship. Although it may take the Jívaro two or three days to find the lost child, they almost always succeed and therefore say that the true demon never harms children, but only wants to play with them.

Then the true demon, after existing for a span of years equivalent to a human lifetime, dies and changes into a certain species of giant butterfly or moth called *wampaŋ*. This creature has markings on its wings which lend it the appearance of an owl's face. All the wampaŋ are believed to be souls and are said always to be hungry, as is the case with any of the forms which the true soul takes. When a wampaŋ flies into a house, one of the persons there tosses a small piece of sweet manioc or a few drops of manioc beer in its direction. The Jívaro believe that since the wampaŋ might be the soul of a dead relative or friend it would be wrong to neglect its hunger. They do not fear the creature, however.

After a length of time about which the Jívaro are uncertain, the wampaŋ finally has its wings damaged by raindrops as it flutters through a rainstorm and dies on the ground. The true soul then changes into water vapor amidst the falling rain. All fog and clouds are believed to be the last form taken by true souls. The true soul undergoes no more transformations and persists eternally in the form of mist.

Of the three kinds of souls in which the Jívaro believe, they seem to be least interested in the "true" one, the nĕkás wakanI, which does little to help the individual survive in his insecure society. It is the arutam soul instead which seems to rank first in the Jívaro mind. The arutam soul possessor believes himself to be unkillable, thereby gaining a greatly-desired sense of security in a social context of continual physical violence and interpersonal sorcery, both real and imagined. Paradoxically, the arutam soul concept also endorses assassination as a necessary form of behavior in the society.

32:Harner E-5 (1956-1957) 1962 SD9 Jivaro SD9



The arutam soul belief system contains a number of significant supernatural traits organized together into one internally logical complex. In this system the central idea of immunity from death is combined with such anthropologically well-known concepts as: a vision quest; a guardian spirit; eternal and multiple souls; a variety of generalized ancestor worship; reincarnation; soul-loss; soul-capture; nonshamanistic spirit possession; and a concept of personally-acquired impersonal power, kakarma, which resembles, but is not precisely identical to, the Oceanian mana.

The concept of the muisak furnishes the rationale for head-taking and shrinking, as well as explaining as supernatural murders those deaths which in many other cultures would be ascribed to accidental causes. In conclusion, one may observe that the Jívaro are so preoccupied with killing in real life that it seems only consistent that their two most emphasized types of souls, the muisak and the arutam soul, are supernatural devices, respectively, for murdering and avoiding being murdered. Beyond this, it is clear that these internally coherent and complex bodies of belief are an important part of the Jívaro view of reality and, as such, affect their overt behavior.

## A COMMENTARY ON PREVIOUS REPORTS

A few brief comments seem to be due the reader to clarify the differences between the statements presented here and those of Karsten and Stirling, the chief contributors to the literature on the Jívaro proper. The souls will be considered here in the same order as in the preceding body of the paper, with the arutam soul first.

The "arutam" dealt with here is the "*arutama*" of Karsten (1935:448–51) and the "*tsarutama*" of Stirling (1938:115, 116). Karsten's term is a corruption of "arutam," found in a trade language used between the Jívaro and the Ecuadorian mestizos living in the village of Macas. As Karsten (1954:25) has already pointed out, Stirling's term does not exist in the Jívaro dialect.

Karsten (1954:25) has stated, "The word *aruka* or *arutam* in the Jíbaro language means 'old'; as a religious term *arutama* may be translated into 'The Old Ones.' . . ." Actually, however, while both words do have the same root, and *aruA* does indeed mean "old" or "used," the term "arutam" refers exclusively to the special vision which I have termed "ancient specter." My informants assured me that it does not mean "old ones." Also an arutam, however frightening it may appear, never kills anyone, despite a statement to the contrary by Karsten (1935:450). Although Karsten (1935:448–50) had some of the visions described to him, he was unaware of the souls responsible for them and the related system of belief.

While Stirling (1938:115) recognizes a similarity between his "*tsarutama*" (arutam) and concepts of the mana type in other cultures, he is misleading in stating that "tsarutama" is the force itself or that "it gives supernatural properties to certain classes of animals, plants or natural phenomena." When an arutam appears to a Jívaro, it is actually recognized to be a vision, distinct from natural forms of life or other natural phenomena.

/332 cont./

301 preferably used. In addition there are neck and arm bands, in
[824] part made with great effort out of plant seeds, out of pieces of
[237] shell, each of which must be bored separately, or out of
European porcelain beads; even the men do not scorn this orna-
mentation completely.

142 Assured and proud, the Jívaro moves in the consciousness
157 of his freedom. The naked, well-proportioned forms of the
[834] men are handsome; the women, on the other hand, are small
and heavy-set, but good-natured and at most seductive in their
earliest youth, but with advancing age terribly ugly, and all the
more so as they are then less modest and expose their bodies,
142 disfigured by hard labor, more to the eye. The color of the well-
[144] tended skin is a light red-brown for all, as is peculiar to the
Indians of the highlands. This difference is often ascribed to
mixture with the women abducted during the destruction of the
Spanish cities, /333/ but the dirtiness of the Quechua Indians
[157] may play a not unimportant role in this. The facial expression
is usually good-natured and intelligent. The wives were always
595 treated with kindness, their advice sought in almost all negotia-
593 tions, and the children are allowed to do what they please. I
say wives, for seldom does a Jívaro content himself with one
partner for life; he has two, three, or four and cannot under-
stand at all that his polygamy is unlawful, since he takes care of
his wives and children, whereas the moralistic Christian preachers
595 all too gladly shun these duties. Sometimes several women
with their children live in one and the same house; sometimes
the lord and master has several houses far from one another and
[581] has his wife or wives in each of them. The bond of marriage
[648] is kept holy; in the case of adultery the husband has the right
to kill his wife. The institution of polygyny, no matter how
reprehensible it may be from our standpoint, surely is justified
●181 under the conditions that we find among the Jívaros. In the case
595 of a wandering, warlike people which frequently changes resi-
628 dence and in which the individual tribes, indeed, even the
648 individual families, live in war and conflict, the man must
always be ready to defend his person and his property; he must

practice the use of weapons, live for battle and the hunt.

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# INTRODUCTION

Only one tribe of American Indians is known ever to have successfully revolted against the empire of Spain and to have thwarted all subsequent attempts by the Spaniards to reconquer them: the Jívaro (hee'-va-ro), the *untsuri šuarä* of eastern Ecuador. From 1599 onward they remained unconquered in their forest fastness east of the Andes, despite the fact that they were known to occupy one of the richest placer gold deposit regions in all of South America.

Tales of their fierceness became part of the folklore of Latin America, and their warlike reputation spread in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when Jívaro "shrunken head" trophies, *tsantsa*, found their way to the markets of exotica in the Western world. As occasional travelers visited them in the first decades of this century, the Jívaro also became known not as just a warlike group, but as an individualistic people intensely jealous of their freedom and unwilling to be subservient to authority, even among themselves. It was this quality that particularly attracted me when I went to study their way of life in 1956–57 and I was most fortunate, at that time, to find, especially east of the Cordillera de Cutucú, a portion of the Jívaro still unconquered and still living, with some changes, their traditional life style. This book is about their culture.

A factor that contributed to my decision to do fieldwork among the Jívaro was the incredible volume of contradictory and often obviously unreliable information on their culture.

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## *Chapter 1*

# THE JÍVARO: BACKGROUND

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I say truly to Your Highnesses that these people are the most insolent that I have seen in all the time that I have traveled in the Indies and engaged in their conquest.

*Captain Hernando de Benavente —on the Jívaro in a letter to the Royal* Audiencia *of Spain, March 25, 1550*[1]

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Where the westward-drifting cloud cover of the upper Amazon basin collides with the eastern cordillera of the Ecuadorian Andes, cold rivulets cascade into the misty forests to form swift, growing streams descending towards the Atlantic Ocean, a continent away. Where the mountain waterfalls give way to rapids, the country of the *untsuri šuarā*, the Jívaro, begins; and where the rapids finally end in placid meandering rivers, so does their homeland. Downstream from the rapids live their traditional enemies, the *ačuarā šuarā* and the *tsumu šuarā*, Indians who travel more by canoe than on foot. But the rapids are more than a geophysical feature; they are a protective barrier that has long halted exploitative penetration of the Jívaro country from the navigable river systems of the rest of the Amazon basin to the east. And the escarpment of the Andes, to their west, which is the most abrupt in all the length of South America, has similarly been an old and silent ally in inhibiting successful

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conquest and colonization from the highlands. This then, is the home of the Jívaro, a wet, mountainous, and heavily forested sanctuary which helped preserve the freedom and

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*Chapter IV*

# THE HIDDEN WORLD

I go where there is a great waterfall.
It emerges where the mountains become stone.
This waterfall will give me strength.

I hope that with this long journey
I shall have an encounter
In order to have a very long life.

From the song of a man making the
trip to encounter an *arutam*

The Jívaro believe that the true determinants of life and death are normally invisible forces which can be seen and utilized only with the aid of hallucinogenic drugs. The normal waking life is explicitly viewed as "false" or "a lie," and it is firmly believed that truth about causality is to be found by entering the supernatural world or what the Jívaro view as the "real" world, for they feel that the events which take place within it underlie and are the basis for many of the surface manifestations and mysteries of daily life.

Thus, within a few days of birth, a baby is given a hallucinogenic drug to help it enter the "real" world and hopefully to obtain help in surviving the hazards of infancy through seeing an "ancient specter." If an older child misbehaves, his parents may administer another, stronger, hallucinogen to enable him to see that the "reality" on which they base their knowledge and authority does indeed exist. Even hunting dogs are given their own special hallucinogen to provide them with the essential contact with the supernatural plane.

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such as whooping cough, measles, colds, and some mild diarrheas. The normal waking life, as noted before, is simply "a lie," or illusion, while the true forces that determine daily events are supernatural and can only be seen and manipulated with the aid of hallucinogenic drugs. A reality view of this kind creates a demand for shamans, part-time specialists who can cross over into the "real" world at will to help others to deal with the forces that influence and even determine the events of the waking life.

Jívaro shamans (*wisiin*) are of two types: bewitchers and curers. Both kinds take a hallucinogenic drink, whose Jívaro name is *natemá*, in order to enter the supernatural world. This brew, commonly called *yagé* or *yajé* in Colombia, *ayahuasca* (Inca: "vine of the dead") in Ecuador and Peru, and *caapi* in Brazil is prepared from segments of a species of the vine *Banisteriopsis*, a genus belonging to the Malpighiaceae. The Jívaro boil it with the leaves of a similar vine, *yabi*, which probably is also a species of *Banisteriopsis*, to produce the cooled *natemá* tea that contains the powerful hallucinogenic alkaloids harmaline, harmine, d-tetrahydroharmine, and quite possibly N,N-dimethyltryptamine (DMT) (see Plate 22).[10] These compounds have chemical structures and effects similar, but not identical to, LSD, mescaline of the peyote cactus, and psilocybin of the psychotropic Mexican mushroom.

Shamans prefer to use *natemá* rather than *maikua* (*Datura arborea*) for going into trances, because the potency of the latter is too great for the shaman to be able to function ritually in singing, sucking, and the accompanying social interaction. Also, since the shaman must go into trances with frequency, he does not like to use *Datura* for that purpose because the strength of the plant is such that its repeated use is believed to lead to insanity. As an illustration of this

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765 *tsantsa*, for increasing the power of women who are members
of the host's household. Therefore, any fight that erupts is
796 immediately stopped by the other male participants, led by
[774] the male master of ceremonies, the *wea*, who usually has been
[778] selected for the role because of his considerable ritual knowl-
[554] edge and prestige. Fights between females at the feast, al-
[624] though less common, are similarly halted by the women, led
[562] by the female ceremonial leader, the *ubá*, who is selected on a
basis similar to that for the *wea*. Thus the religious, ritual,
765 and social pressures of the occasion operate to make it the
796 safest, most euphoric, and largest social gathering known to
727 the Jívaro. It is not surprising, therefore, that the *tsantsa*
feasts tend to be viewed by the Jívaro as the pinnacles of
[619] their social lives. It is also expectable, given the ethos of kill-
[571] ing and counter-killing, that this, the greatest celebration,
[181] centers around the indisputable evidence of a triumph over a
[533] common enemy. The intimate interaction between the eupho-
[535] ria of the celebration and the awareness of the murdered
[539] enemy is illustrated by this *tsantsa* feast circle dance song:

Today, today, let us greet the dawn only playing.
Today, today, let us greet the dawn only playing.
Cuwi[3] tells me
Cuwi tells me
We are going to greet the dawn playing.
Cuwi tells me
Cuwi tells me
We are going to greet the dawn.

And they taught me previously,
I cannot sleep easily,
And I will meet the dawn together with Cuwi.
And don't you sleep!
And don't you sleep!
For now it is dawning, for now it is dawning.

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124 changes, the investigator normally attempted to compare the views of a number of persons regarding modifications in each type of cultural activity. Accordingly, a trend is reported here only if it was substantiated independently by at least several reliable informants. To heighten the accuracy of such information, the trends reported here are further restricted to those which the informants had observed during the passage of their own lifetimes. Changes that had reportedly gone on in the culture previously, and for which the information was therefore of a hearsay type, are not included unless specifically so noted. Thus the reported
114 changes primarily occurred during the period ca. 1895–1957. The ethnographic present in this chapter, as elsewhere, is 1956–57.

121 It should be pointed out that the material that follows
124 often includes consideration of causal factors from the informants' point of view. Such statements of opinion regarding causal relationships between changes are, unless otherwise indicated, those of elderly, knowledgeable informants whom I respected for their intelligence and ability to analyze the events about them. In asking and respecting the opinions of native informants about causality I depart from the position of some anthropologists who have seemed to doubt the ability of non-literate peoples to provide meaningful analysis of causal relationships within their own culture. On the
121 contrary, I have found that the Jivaro are extremely aware of,
124 and alert to, the factors directly influencing their lives, and
151 normally I found their hypotheses superior to those that I
• 181 proposed and tested in the field. Unlike some other non-literate populations, for example the Conibo Indians of eastern Peru, whom I have also studied, the Jivaro almost never explain any behavior, traditional or otherwise, on the basis of such a statement as "we do it that way because our ancestors

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did" or "we do it that way because other people would laugh at us if we did it differently." The Jivaro seem proud of their ability to judge for themselves the usefulness of continuing or changing their traditional behavior on very pragmatic and personal grounds. All this does not mean to convey the idea that the Jivaro are natural anthropologists, but simply that their knowledge of the factors which influence the changes that they make as individuals should be respected sufficiently to be collected and included as useful ethnological data.

The main variables introduced into interior Jivaro culture during the period studied were Western-manufactured trade goods, especially machetes, axes, and guns. Some machetes were acquired by the frontier Jivaro near Macas about a hundred years ago,[9] but very few reached the interior Jivaro by intra-tribal trade until the turn of the century, and even these were so scarce and valued that their blades were each split into fragments to permit their utilization by several households. The more efficient steel blade fragments were at first used in the same manner as the aboriginal stone axe heads, each machete piece being mounted into a wooden handle. After the 1930's, however, machetes became sufficiently abundant so that the need to split the blades into small fragments was eliminated. They also largely replaced by then the traditional palm-wood "machetes" used in cutting down garden weeds. Despite their fair degree of availability at the present time, steel machetes are still highly valued and are used for many years, long after they have lost their handles and have become worn down to a fraction of their former size. Today they are considered to be utterly indispensable tools by the Jivaro, who also have been able to acquire some single-bitted steel axe-heads, although in much smaller numbers than the machetes.

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partnership pattern in recent decades has also been associated with the more common use of the "friend" term of address (*amiñi*) between people in general, in preference to kinship terms. The "friend" term is now used increasingly: (1) to remind neighbors and relatives solely of some earlier obligation, and (2) to indicate a friendly feeling for the person addressed beyond the necessities of kinship obligations.

The only discernible changes in kinship formal structure have occurred in the adoption, increase, or decrease in use of a few specific terms of address by men and the adoption of a men's term of reference (*awe*) by women. A few Achuara terms of address have been introduced through the inter-tribal trading partnerships. These are indicated on Table 1, which shows also the elementary kinship terms of reference and the terms of address.

One of the clearest socio-economic trends has been the tendency for ever greater numbers of persons, especially men, to become shamans, as well as trading partners, during the past few decades. Informants uniformly ascribe this trend to the desire of individuals to acquire "white men's valuables," especially machetes and firearms, and to distribute these goods in order to win friendship. The considerable growth of socio-economic power wielded by shamans in their neighborhoods is also a recent development involving: (1) an increase in their proportionate numbers in the population, (2) a growth in the demand for their services, and (3) an increase in their accumulated material valuables, with the resulting development of some individual differentiation in terms of wealth in trade goods. This development has been facilitated by the fact that the shamans can successfully accumulate goods because of the laymen's fear of asking them for gifts. The rise in numbers of shamans is also believed to have increased the amount of illness and death due to witchcraft.

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partially as a retaliatory response to the growth in fatal be-
witchings.

The rise in adultery is attributed to the tendency of young men not to work as hard as in former decades and instead to spend their time visiting other households to drink beer, look for sexual partners, and perhaps obtain trade goods through making "friends." This increase in intra-neighborhood visiting and shamanism may be due to the greater leisure time available for the men since the introduction of steel cutting tools, but informants themselves primarily ascribe the trends in visiting and shamanism to the young men's fixation on the acquisition of the "white man's valuables," particularly firearms, and a resultant de-emphasis on hard physical work, especially in land clearing.

The growth in witchcraft, and of the sanctions applied against it, has resulted in an intensification of the traditional Jivaro feuding pattern during the past half-century. The Jivaro partially ascribe this intensification to the decline of inter-tribal head-taking raids which they themselves recognize as having been an activity which acted as an outlet for men who wished to engage in killing. Today, because of the trade-derived inhibitions against raids on the Achuara, killings and protracted feuding have become more frequent within the Jivaro tribe and even within the neighborhood.

Inter-tribal head-taking raids, i.e., "war," in contrast, have declined steadily both in frequency and size for about the last four to five decades. Today usually not more than one such expedition takes place every year, and a war party rarely exceeds forty warriors, whereas at the turn of the century such expeditions apparently were almost monthly attacking the Achuara, and an estimated four hundred to five hundred warriors sometimes took part in a single raid.

The decline in inter-tribal warfare is attributed to the